DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 266 533 EA 018 161

AUTHOR Lockledge, Ann
TITLE Review of the Literature Regarding Personnel Serving in American Sponsored Overseas Schools.
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 15p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Characteristics; Administrators; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; *Institutional Characteristics; Overseas Employment; *Teacher Characteristics; Teacher Employment; Teachers
IDENTIFIERS *Dependents Schools

ABSTRACT

Twenty-nine publications discussing various aspects of education in American-sponsored overseas schools are reviewed in this document. The materials examined provide information on the characteristics of the schools, their staffs and their student bodies. Particular attention is paid to chief school administrators and teachers. The literature covers the training, personalities, attitudes, and professional activities of the administrators. The literature also explores the teachers' education, turnover, employment status, personalities, preparation for overseas employment, and attitudes toward computer use. (PGD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED266533

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ann Lockledge

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE REGARDING PERSONNEL SERVING IN AMERICAN SPONSORED OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

Ann Lockledge

Division of Education and Psychology

Black Hills State College

Spearfish, SD 57783

1985

EA 015 161

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE REGARDING PERSONNEL SERVING IN AMERICAN SPONSORED OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

American sponsored elementary and secondary overseas schools (ASOS) have been a significant part of the international education scene for nearly a century. Educating children from the United States, host countries, and a multitude of other countries, they are really multinational in curriculum, student body and school staff.

Those who go abroad insist that adequate educational opportunities be available for their children (Cleveland, Mangone & Adams, 1960). Thus came into existance schools which receive some support from the U.S. Department of State but are in essence parent-operated. Some students come from the same culture as the school, some from the local culture, and some represent still a third culture. Although most administrators and teachers were trained in the tradition of United States Public Schools, they operate in a private school setting which tends to be highly academic in nature.

The Setting for ASOS Personnel

These schools are completely independent but model themselves after both private and public schools in the United States. The curricula, textbooks, instructional materials, and methods of instruction are primarily brought from the United States with some attention given to the language and culture of the host country (Orr 1976). The ASOS schools employ over 3,000 professional staff members from all parts of the United States and Canada and 2500 host country

and third country staff members who work under the direction of United States trained educators (Patterson, 1980).

Superintendents of some ASOS have built excellent educational programs and facilities using a plethora of sources for guidelines anthough the schools are widely divergent in size of the student body, nationality of the students, the curriculum offerings, the time allotments, and the amound of space allocated for educational facilities (Draper, 1981).

The first financial assistance to overseas schools began in 1944 when Congress appropriated nearly a quarter of a million dollars to help a small group of schools in Latin America. In 1957 the assistance became worldwide when United States-owned local currencies were made available for that purpose. In 1964 the Office of Overseas Schools of the Department of State was established to coordinate the programs of assistance. Schools in the American Republics differ from schools in other regions in that they can be described as being binational in character with over 50% of both students and staff being citizens of the countries in which the schools are located. This is in contrast to the seventeen schools of East Asia, 70% of whose staff and student body are United States citizens. Located in 80 different countries, most of the schools have an enrollment under 600 although a few have grown to over 2000 students (Luebke, 1976).

Luebke (1976) explains that the great diversity among overseas schools dictates that curricular programs will vary widely, with some schools operating simply as transplanted American institutions and others incorporating a strong international dimension. Bowyer and Fox (1984) stress that the ASOS schools are really multinational in curriculum, student body and school staff which

means that there is ample opportunity for students to come to know and understand other peoples and their cultural backgrounds.

Thomas (1975) found that U.S. parents of students in overseas schools approved fostering cross-cultural understanding and exchange and wanted to raise the level of host country language instruction. They wanted individualized approaches to education and less instructional rigidity, but they opposed the lessening of American influence and contact of United States students with their own culture. Stoddard (1980) in doing an ethnography of two ASOS schools, found that the schools tried to replicate the best of American education by transplanting the classroom techniques, curricula, and classroom organization that promoted competition and individualism rather than cooperation.

Most of the larger schools listed on the A/OS Fact Sheets (Office of Overseas Schools, 1983) are accredited. According to Bowyer and Fox (1984) the accreditation means that the school's programs, facilities and staff have met established evaluation standards and that teachers possess valid teaching certificates.

Draper (1981) developed a profile of existing programs in American overseas schools. He found a freat deal of difference among the schools in size and nationality of the student body, curriculum organization and time allotments, and the amount of space available for educational activities. Conlan (1982) found that in the American Republics the U.S. style curriculum was enriched by the host country culture and language. She also found that staff development enhanced cross cultural understanding. This coincided with Draper's finding that when host country culture, language, and geography are given attention, the

American expatriate student can forge a positive link between the U.S. and the host country.

The Chief School Administrator

Almost all chief school administrators are United States citizens. Accrediting agencies require that they have an advanced degree from an institution in the United States with a minimum of 15 hours in administrative courses. Over 25% have earned doctorates (Lockledge, 1985). Earlier studies (King, 1968, Manino, 1971) indicated that up to 75% of administrators had been in their present job less than two years. This does not necessarily mean that they lack administrative experience in similar settings since many overseas administrators move around the world while staying within the ASOS framework. Administrators, like import teachers, work on two or three year contracts with special provision for return fare for themselves and their family at the end of the contract period (Shepherd, 1981).

Most of these larger schools are located in the capital cities of the host countries, although some countries such as Brazil have a number of schools. The students included dependents of United States citizens, host country nationals and children from the international business and diplomatic community. All of the schools have faculty from the host country as well as import teachers from the United States.

Very few of the administrators had only a bachelor's degree, 57% had a masters and 40% had a doctorate. The administrators were highly experienced with only 17% saying they had 10 or less years of experience. Almost all of the

administrators have worked first in the United States, and over half have worked in two or more countries overseas as well as in the United States. The administrators tend to have a broad background with about one-fourth having degrees only in education and educational administration, ten percent having degrees only in content subjects areas, while nearly two-thirds had degrees in both content areas and in education or educational administration (Lockledge, 1985).

Roth (1972) investigated the characteristics of chief school administrators in ASOS schools and found them to be, typically, well educated, married males in their mid-thirties to mid-fifties who liked their life style and intended to make a career of overseas educational work. They had changed jobs on the average of one to six times and had been in their position less than four years. Of the administrators surveyed by Perez (1981) almost one-half had been in an overseas administrative job before accepting the current position. When asked their reasons for going overseas, these administrators listed the cross-cultural experience with the greatest frequency, closely followed by professional advancement and an improved lifestyle.

Using the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire to compare the profile of characteristics of overseas superintendents with the profile of characteristics of school administrators in the United States, Vest (1971) tried to develop some criteria for screening and selecting chief school administrators. The personality characteristics were significantly different so as to reject the "good-man-at-home-is-a-good-man-abroad" theory. These personality characteristics were not used by Engleman (1974), however, when he wrote a

brochure of suggestions for overseas school boards to use in selecting a new chief administrative officer.

Schaffer (1980) studied the stress perception among superintendents in overseas schools. Nearly half of the respondents reported their jobs to be usually or always stressful and less than half had adopted compensating practices that they considered to be highly successful.

Chief school administrators (Bentz, 1972) maintain a cluster of relationships with one or more social institutions within the local, national, and international community influenced by the size and composition of the expatriate community, the mobile nature of the various segments, and the different cultural notions each segment holds about the means for educating children and youth.

Morris (1979) found that boards of education of ASOS do employ a significant number of women to administer their schools. These women are typically married with children at home and household help to perform domestic tasks. She reported that the women had few difficulties in seeking and securing their positions and that they perceived themselves as competent to perform administrative tasks.

As of 1979, the chief school administrators of ASOS did not fully agree on the applicability of Public Law 94-142 standards for their schools. They reported themselves confused about their legal obligations to handicapped students. Admission policies, lack of trained personnel, lack of facilities, and excessive costs were mentioned as obstacles. More than 1500 pupils were identified as handicapped by superintendents in the 1978-79 academic year but only about 2/3 were receiving special services (Loughlin, 1979).

The Teachers

On a world-wide basis over half of the ASOS teachers are United States citizens. Contracts to import teachers are usually offered for a two year period after which return fare to the United States is paid. Some teachers extend for another year, but most move on to teach in some other geographical area. Stability often comes from host country or locally hired teachers who were trained in either the United States or Canada and work under renewable contracts.

Over two thirds of the elementary teachers have their degree or degrees in education. Another fifth have content area degrees while only a tenth had both. Almost all of the teachers have degrees from a university in the United States. A little less than half of the elementary teachers hold a master's degree and a very few have a doctorate. Teachers are usually highly experienced with over two thirds having more than 5 years of experience. Over one third of the teachers had taught in the United States and two or more countries overseas. Another fifteen percent had taught both in the United States and the one foreign country in which they were currently working. But nearly half of the teachers have never taught in the United States. Over one third had worked in two or more countries overseas but had never taught at home, while about ten percent of the teachers had taught in just the one overseas country where they were located when they completed the questionnaire (Lockledge, 1985).

Because of the high rate of turnover among overseas teachers (Qubeck, 1970), recruitment and retention of import teachers is one of the major concerns of the overseas superintendent (Shepherd, 1981; Tucker, 1974; King, 1968).

Selection is difficult because the criteria that must be considered are not only professional but personal as well (Shepherd, 1981). Calhoun (1977) found that teachers in Europe with positive cross-cultural motives and expectations adjusted to overseas teaching better than those who held negative expectations. Wire (1973) using the Gordon Personality Inventory found a significant correlation in Taiwan between cultural adjustment and personality measures.

Schober (1977) showed that schools which paid higher salaries had teachers with higher qualifications while schools with lower pay tended to have a high percentage of host country national teachers. Since schools act independently of one another in the hiring process (Tucker, 1974), recruitment, selection and retention are left up to individual administrators (King,1968).

Schackow (1971) surveyed successful American overseas teachers and found that they differ significantly from their stateside counterparts on 5 of 16 personality factors. Overseas teachers were significantly and consistently more "intelligent, venturesome, imaginative, and forthright." Schackow concluded that personality selection criteria used in the United States for stateside teacher selection may not be applicable in the overseas environment. Kingsbury (1974) developed and evaluated an attitude scale to assist the overseas school administrator in identifying those teachers best able to make the adjustment to life and work in an alien culture. He suggested that an attitude scale which includes self-acceptance, acceptance of others, and cross-cultural acceptance be used, along with academic ability, aptitude, and personal recomendations, in selecting teachers.

Rushcamp (1979) found that a pre-arrival orientation was needed to assist newly hired American expatriate teachers in adjusting to the new environment in

Near East-South Asia schools. Calhoun (1977) in studying culture shock, found that in five European schools the more varied the previous experiences of the teachers, the better they adjusted to life overseas. The factors that most aided adjustment were knowledge of the host country language and positive cross-cultural motives and expectations. In Latin American schools, it was found that retention increased when schools assisted with adjustment in areas such as shopping, meeting people, pursuit of hobbies, and opportunities for leisure time (Shepherd, 1981).

Valesky (1984) had a total of 385 ASOS teachers who responded to a survey concerning their willingness to implement computer based instruction using micocomputers. He found that teachers who had been in a position for 3 to 4 years had a more positive attitude toward computer assisted instruction than those who had been in the same position for 1 to 2 years or for 5 or more years. He also found that the teachers in the Near East-South Asia region had the most positive attitudes and that the teachers in the European region the least positive attitudes toward the use of microcomputers.

Both teachers and administrators appear to be well educated and experienced. The administrators are more experienced than the teachers and a greater number of them have worked in the United States. More of the teachers' experience tends to be overseas but administrators seem to have a broader background as evidenced by the greater variety in college majors as well as the greater number of advanced degrees. One can conclude that United States citizens working in the larger cities overseas can find adequate education for their children thanks to the sponsorship of American-style schooling by the Department of State.

REFERENCES

Adams, A.A. (1976). A study of school board policies in selected schools that are approved and financially assisted by the A/OS Department of State, Washington, D.C. located in Africa, Asia, Europe, Central America and South America. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Washington State University.

Aver, J.S. (1963). The organization of American Community School in the Far East. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles.

Bowyer, C.H. & Fox, B.B. (1984) Teaching overseas: The Caribbean and Latin American area. Barranquilla, Colombia: Inter-Regional Center for Curriculum and Materials Development.

Calhoun, T.W. (1977). Culture shock and its effects on American teachers in overseas schools: An exploratory study. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts.

Cleveland, Harlan, Mangone, G.J., & Adams, J.V. (1960). The overseas Americans. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc.

Cockrell, F.O. (1978). A model regional education development center for Near East-South Asia Council of Overseas School. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Arkansas.

Commmission for the Assessment of the Intercultural Contributions of the American-sponsored Overseas Schools. (1971). An investment in human futures. Washington, D.C.: American Association of School Administrators.

Dafoe, D.M. (1976). A guidebook for the governance and management of overseas schools. Fairbanks: Center for Northern Educational Research, University of Alaska.

Engleman, F.E. (1974). Selecting the chief administrative officer of an American-sponsored overseas school. Association for the Advancement of International Education.

Fox, B.B., Bowyer, C.H. & Link, J. (1983). Guidelines for bi-national school planning. Barranquilla, Colombia: Inter-Regional Center for Curriculum and Materials Development.

Fox, B.B., (1981). Recruitment and retention: the never ending battle. Inter-Regional News Bulletin. Barranquilla, Colombia: Inter-Regional Center for Curriculum and Materials Development.

Harvey, C. C. (1976). A study of selected information concerning board members of selected American-sponsored overseas school during 1975-76. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alabama.

Honey, L. (1973). A history of the American School in Mexico City. Mexico, D.F.: American School Foundation.

King, B. (1968). The recruitment, selection and retention of teachers for overseas schools. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Wayne State University, 1968.

Howard, P.C. (1983). American-sponsored overseas schools: A dissertation integration. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University.

Lockledge, M. A. (1985). The Importance of selected teacher behaviors in American sponsored overseas schools. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University.

Loughlin, M.J. (1979). The prevalence and needs of handicapped children in overseas American-sponsored schools, and the services available to them: an assesment. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Luebke, P. T. (1976). American elementary and secondary community schools abroad, Washington, D.C.: American Association of School Administrators.

Mandrell, J.E. (1980). Perceptions of administrators of American-sponsored overseas school in Mexico and private schools in Alabama as related to teacher-selection criteria. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alabama.

Manino, E.N. (1971). The overseas education of elementary and secondary school pupils with application for American-sponsored schools: A diagnosis and plan for action. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University.

Morris, M.P. (1979). Critical characteristics of top level women administrators in the overseas American sponsored schools. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Denver.

Orr, P. G. (1974). The American sponsored overseas school: a research matrix, Buzzards Bay, MA: The Center for International Education.

Patterson, C.J, & Patterson, M.F. (1980). A profile of a wife of an American sponsored overseas administrator, Buzzards Bay, MA: The Center for International Education.

Perez, M.V. (1981). Job acceptance and job satisfaction: A study of chief admnistrators of American-sponsored overseas schools in Latin America. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Alabama.

Rushcamp, T.J. (1979) An examination of the problems associated with the recruitment and retention of American expatriate teachers in the Near East-South Asia Council of International Schools. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University.

Schackow, C.F. (1971). Selected personality characteristics of the American overseas teacher. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Miami University.

Thomas, N. (1975). A study of the conditions leading to the utilization of host country professional staff for service in the United States sponsored overseas schools. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Pacific State University.

Tucker, Gayle Hestal. (1974). An analysis of the problems associated with the recruitment and retention of import-teachers in the Association of Colombian - Caribbean American Schools and the Association of American Schools in Central America. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alabama.

Wylie, Paul Motura. (1973). The development of a manual of guidelines and information base for staff development planning in international schools of Colombia. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Alabama.